

### **THE PENDING CLAIMS**

1. (Previously presented) Swellable hydrogel-forming polymer particles comprising (a) hydrogel-forming polymer particles, (b) at least one hydrophilic polymer of dendritic structure, and (c) at least one water-insoluble phosphate, wherein (b) and (c) are present on the surfaces of particles (a).
2. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 wherein said hydrophilic polymer of dendritic structure comprises a polyester formed from a polyol and 2,2-dimethylolpropionic acid.
3. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 wherein said hydrophilic polymer of dendritic structure comprises a polypropyleneimine, a polyamidoamine, or a polyesteramide.
4. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 wherein said water-insoluble phosphate comprises a calcium phosphate.
5. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 further comprising a powdery additive, a dusty additive, or a mixture thereof.
6. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 5 wherein said additive comprises a metal salt, a pyrogenic silica, a polysaccharide, a nonionic surfactant, a wax, diatomaceous earth, or mixtures thereof.
7. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 5 wherein said additive is present in the form of hollow microspheres which are from 1 to 1000  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter and whose wall thickness comprises from 1% to 10% of said diameter.
8. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 comprising less than 50 weight ppm of particles less than 10  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter.
9. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 comprising less than 50 weight ppm of particles less than 10  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter after exposure to a mechanical stress.
10. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 wherein not less than 90% by weight of the particles are between 150 and 500  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter and which are characterized by a CRC of not less than 25 g/g, an AUL or not less than 22 g/g, and an SFC of not less than  $80 \times 10^{-7} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ sg}^{-1}$ .

11. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 wherein not less than 90% by weight of the particles are between 100 and 600  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter and which are characterized by a CRC of not less than 25 g/g, an AUL of not less than 22 g/g, and an SFC of not less than  $60 \times 10^{-7} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ sg}^{-1}$ .

12. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 11 wherein not less than 95% by weight of the particles are between 100 and 600  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter.

13. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 11 wherein not less than 99% by weight of the particles are between 100 and 600  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter.

14. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 having a CRC of not less than 26 g/g and an AUL of not less than 23 g/g.

15. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 having a CRC of not less than 30 g/g and an AUL of not less than 25 g/g.

16. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 having an SFC of not less than  $80 \times 10^{-7} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ sg}^{-1}$ .

17. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 having an SFC of not less than  $120 \times 10^{-7} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ sg}^{-1}$ .

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 wherein the hydrogel-forming polymer particles (a) comprise a partially neutralized polyacrylic acid.

24. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 wherein the particles are surface-postcrosslinked with at least one surface postcrosslinker.

25. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 wherein the hydrophilic polymer of dendritic structure is present on the surfaces of particles (a) from 0.005% to 10%, by weight, of the swellable hydrogel-forming polymer particles.

26. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 wherein said hydrophilic polymer of dendritic structure comprises a polyester formed from a polyol and 2,2-dimethylolpropionic acid and said water insoluble phosphate comprises a calcium phosphate.

27. (Previously presented) The polymer particles of claim 1 wherein said hydrophilic polymer of dendritic structure comprises a polypropyleneimine, a polyamidoamine, or a polyesteramide and said water insoluble phosphate comprises a calcium phosphate.